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Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EURE-00 SY-05 USSS-00 SIL-01 LAB-04

EB-07 COME-00 OPR-02 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 /072 W
---------- 108004
O 241410Z FEB 76
FM AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6066

C O N F I D E N T I A L REYKJAVIK 0259

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION CINCLANT INFO AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK,
CINCLANTFLT, COMNAVAIRLANT, AND NAVSTA KEFLAVIK FROM
COMICEDEFOR 232245Z FEB 76 REPEATED TO YOU FOR INFO:

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI
SUBJECT: ICELANDIC UNION BLOCKAGE OF GASOLINE SALES ON
BASE

QUOTE

SITREP/001/232245Z FEB 76
A. CINCLANTINST C3100.1H
1. (C) OVERALL ASSESSMENT OF OPERATIONAL SITUATION:
AT PRESENT THERE IS NO DEGRADATION OF CAPABILITY OR READINESS OF FORC
ES
ASSIGNED. NO LOGISTICS PROBLEMS ENVISIONED.
2. (U) EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANT FACTORS: NONE
3. (U) INTELLIGENCE: NONE
4. (C) SIGNIFICANT POLITICAL, MILITARY, OR PUBLICE INTEREST EVENTS:
A. AT 0815 THIS DATE FIVE ICELANDERS FROM THE STRIKING KEFLAVIK
LABORER'S AND SEAMAN'S UNION ARRIVED AT THE NAVSTA KEFLAVIK NAVY
EXCHANGE SERVICE STATION AND ANNOUNCED THEY WERE THERE "TO CLOSE
IT DOWN". AN ICELANDIC POLICEMAN ARRIVED AT THE SAME TIME, BUT
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HE MADE NO EFFORT TO INTERCEDE IN ANY WAY. WHEN ASKED WHAT HE

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WAS GOING TO DO TO HALT THE ILLEGAL ACTION BY THE STRIKERS HE
REPLIED THAT "HE COULD TAKE NO ACTION" AND "THE MATTER MUST BE
RESOLVED BY HIGHER AUTHORITY." THE STRIKERS BLOCKED ACCESS TO THE
FUEL PUMPS AND BY THEIR ACTIONS LEFT LITTLE DOUBT IN THE MINDS
OF THE TWO ICELANDIC STATION ATTENDENTS THAT THEY WOULD RESORT
TO WHAT EVER FORCE WAS NECESSARY TO KEEP THEM FROM PUMPING GAS.
B. HAVING BEEN PREVIOUSLY ADVISED BY THE UNION THAT THE STRIKE
ACTION WAS CONTEMPLATED, THE STATION ATTENDENTS HAD BEEN BRIEFED
NOT TO ENGAGE IN AN ALTERCATION, BUT TO REMAIN AT THEIR ASSIGNED
STATIONS AND KEEP THE PUMPS OPEN. DEFENSE FORCE MEMBERS WAITING
IN LINE WERE TOLD THAT GAS SALES WERE TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED PENDING
RESOLUTION OF A LABOR DISPUTE. THE CHIEF OF POLICE FOR KEFLAVIK
AIRPORT (JUDGE THORGEIR THORSTEINSSON) WAS INFORMED OF THE CIR-
CUMSTANCES AND WAS REQUESTED TO HAVE THE STRIKERS REMOVED FROM THE
PREMISES. HE REPLIED HE HAD BEEN TOLD BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS (MR. HANNES GUDMUNDSON, ACTING DIRECTOR OF THE DEFENSE
DIVISION) TO "TAKE NO ACTION EXCEPT IF A FIGHT STARTS OR DESTRUCTIO
N
OF PROPERTY OCCURS". HE ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THE ACTION TAKEN BY THE
STRIKERS IS ILLEGAL, BUT ADDED "THERE ARE ALWAYS ILLEGAL ACTIONS
TAKEN DURING STRIKES". (COMMENT: POLICE AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS
ACKNOWLEDGE PRIVATELY THAT DURING A GENERAL STRIKE IN ICELAND,
WHATEVER UNION MEMBERS DO, LEGAL OR ILLEGAL, IT IS "EXCUSABLE"
BECAUSE IT'S A "STRIKE ACTION". THEY FURTHER STATE THAT HE WHO OPPO
SES
A "STRIKE ACTION" DOES SO AT GRAVE POLITICAL RISK).
C. THE NAVY EXCHANGE SERVICE STATION REMAINED OPEN ALL DAY BUT
SOLD NO GASOLINE. OTHER SERVICES, OIL CHANGE, GREASE, REPAIRS,
ETC., WERE UNAFFECTED AND CONTINUED IN A NORMAL MANNZLWM THE STATIO
N
CLOSED AT THE REGULAR CLOSING TIME WITHOUT INCIDENT. MORE OF THE SA
ME
IS ANTICIPATED TOMORROW AND EACH DAY UNTIL THE GENERAL STRIKE ENDS.
THE IMMEDIATE IMPACT IS MOSTLY INCONVENIENCE AND MORALE, BUT PER-
SONNEL READINESS COULD BE AFFECTED IF THE STRIKE DRAGS ON.
OFFICIAL VEHICLES ARE NOT AFFECTED. WHEN ASKED WHY, UNION REPRES-
ENTATIVES REPLIED THAT "SOME OF THE DEFENSE FORCE GASOLINE GETS
SIPHONED INTO ICELANDIC GAS TANKS" AND "BECAUSE TEN PERCENT OF
THE PEOPLE IN KEFLAVIK ARE DEFENSE FORCE, THEY SHOULD SUFFER LIKE
EVERYONE ELSE".
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D. TO AVOID SETTING A MOST UNFORTUNATE PRECENENT, ORGINATOR
INTENDS TO CONTINUE TO REFUSE TO CLOSE THE STATION AS DEMANDED BY
THE UNION, AND IT IS ANTICAPATED THAT THE ICELANDIC POLICE WILL
CONTINUE TO "OBSERVE" AND NOT GET INVOLVED. IT THUS APPEARS THAT
WE WILL HAVE AN UNEASY STANDOFF UNTIL THE STRIKE ENDS. (LATEST
PREDICTIONS ARE FOR THREE TO FIVE MORE DAYS).
5. (C) EVENTS WHICH COULD RESULT IN BLOC REACTION: NONE.

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UNQUOTE.
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